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ABSTRACT

Part of a series of home literacy readers with conversational text and sketches, this booklet addresses the Alaskan environment, where the snowmobile or sno-go has recently replaced the dogsled and mechanized land travel. Only with safe drivers is this "Iron Dog" one of man's best friends. The good sno-go driver stays off roads, plane runways, train tracks, and thin or cracked ice. Always mindful of safety procedures, a good driver does not panic when he has a frozen-throttle, rather he turns the engine off with kill button or key. When stuck in a drift, a good driver lifts and walks the running sno-go out. Competent drivers know the maintenance manual: carry tools, spark plugs, and drive belt: always start out with a full gas tank: are aware of their running time: and inform others of their trip timing and route. Safe practices for long trips require taking companions and packing gas, a rope, an ax, a knife, matches, clothes, a first aid kit, food, and a bedroll. Unsafe practices include loading too many people, jumping, tailgating, and wearing long scarves the "Iron Dog" can chew. Towbars, not ropes, should be used to pull sleds safely. When traveling in darkness, it is important to make sure lights and flashlight work. Lights increase visibility at slow speeds, in surprise fog, or in white-outs. Wearing goggles helps to make stumps, posts, and wires more visible when there is extreme brightness or glare. (SC)

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The Iron Dog

The Care and Keeping of a Sno-go

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The Iron Dog

The Care and Keeping of a Sno-go

by

Rosanne Keller

1977

Literacy Council of Alaska
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The Iron Dog

In Alaska winters are long.
Travel used to be by dogs.
But no more.
Now people go by sno-go.

A few people keep dogs just for fun.
But very few people work with dogs.
Very few people travel by dogs.
The sno-go has taken the place of dogs.
Some people call the sno-go the "Iron Dog."

The "Iron Dog" is one of man's best friends.

Snowy hills,

and valleys,

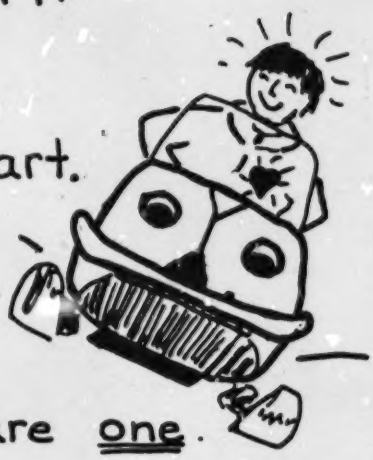
and woods.

This is the home of the Iron Dog.
You can feel free like
a fox,
or a wolf,
or a caribou on a sno-go.

But a sno-go is like a dog.
You have to know how to take care of it.
You have to know what you can do
and what you cannot do with it.

The difference between a sno-go
and a dog.....is You !

An Iron Dog has no brain.
An Iron Dog has no heart.
The sno-go driver is
the brain and heart.



The driver and the sno-go are one.

If the driver is kind...
If the driver is careful...
If the driver thinks of others...

He and his Iron Dog are friends.

But

If the driver is drunk...
If the driver is speeding...

He and his Iron Dog can be Killers!
His Iron Dog becomes a Mad Dog!

What makes an Iron Dog become a Killer?

These are 6 things that can kill.

① Driving a sno-go on roads or train tracks.

If an Iron Dog takes on
a car,
a truck,
or a train

the Iron Dog
does not have a chance!

② Driving a sno-go on air fields.

When a "Silver Bird" and an Iron Dog tangle...

No one has a chance!

③ Driving a sno-go too fast!

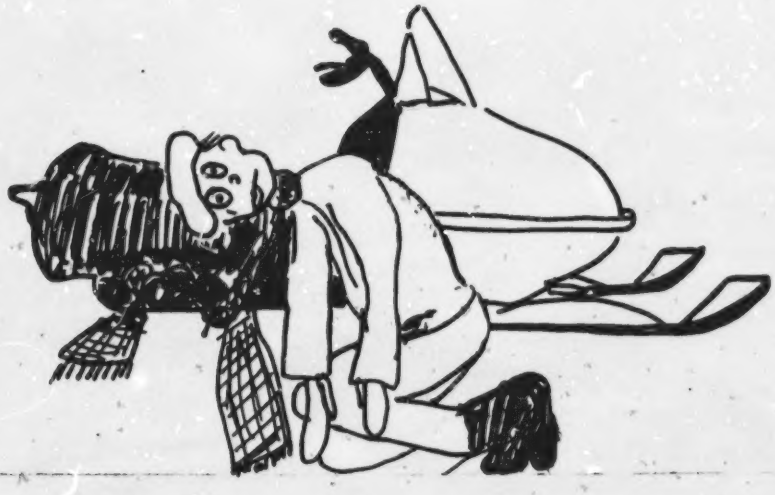
Speed!

Speeding turns an Iron Dog into a Killer!

④ Drinking when driving.

Give any of this to the driver
and he turns his Iron Dog
into a Mad Dog!
Danger! Danger! Danger!

⑤Wearing loose clothing or a long scarf.



The Iron Dog can grab it and chew it.

This can kill!

⑥ Driving wild.

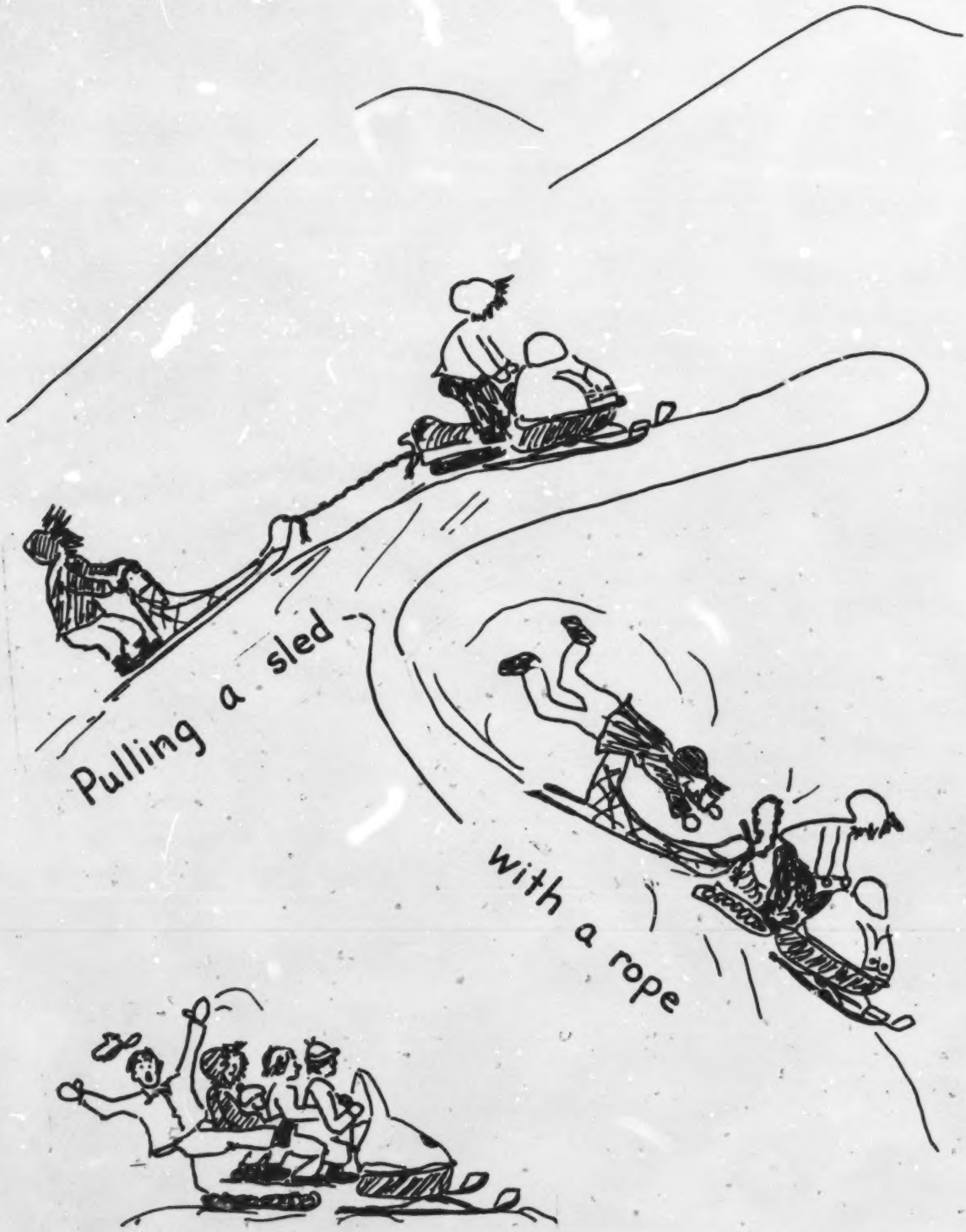
Showing off

Cutting off

Tailgating

Jumping

Jumping onto roads



Riding with too many people

Use your head!

Don't let your Iron Dog be a Killer!

Don't drive on roads or railroad tracks!

Don't drive on air fields!

Don't speed!

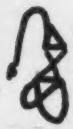
Don't drink while driving!

Don't wear a long scarf or loose clothing!

Don't drive wild!

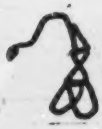
"Hitching up" the Iron Dog.

Tell someone <u>where</u> you are going.
Tell them <u>when</u> you plan to get back.

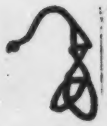


Start with a full tank of gas.

If you are going at night –
Be sure your lights work.
Take a good flashlight.



Never go alone on a long trip!



If you are going a long way –
Take snowshoes, extra gas, ax,
knife, tow rope, **dry matches**,
dry clothes, first aid kit, food,
and a sleeping bag.

The Care and Feeding of the Iron Dog

- Read the book that comes with your sno-go.
  It will tell you how
  to take care of a sno-go.

- Don't let just anybody drive your sno-go.
  Be sure they <u>know</u> <u>how</u> to drive it!

- Take your key out when you leave.
  Kids might try to drive your sno-go.

If you pull a sled,
use a tow-bar.

Don't smoke when putting in gas.

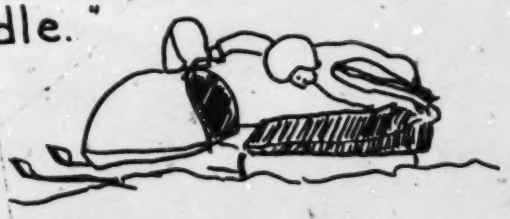
Never leave your sno-go running.
Small children might get hurt.

Find out how <u>long</u> your sno-go
will run on a full tank of gas.

Always carry extra spark plugs,
drive belt
and tool kit.

When things go bad...
Don't panic!

If you get stuck in deep snow—
Stand to one side.
Lift the back "grab handle."
Squeeze the throttle.
Walk the sno-go out.
Don't get your hands or feet in the track.



If the throttle freezes open and you cannot stop—
Just push the kill button

or

turn off the key.

Trail Hazards

Slush or "Overflow"

River or lake ice cracks when it is very cold.
Water overflows from the cracks.
The water mixes with the snow near the ice.
The snow on top keeps the water from freezing.
This is slush or overflow.
Stay away from overflow.

Fog or White-outs

Don't go out in fog or white-outs.
If you get caught in fog or a white-out —
Use your lights.
Go slow.

New Places

When you go to a place that is new —

Go slow.

Look for hazards.

Bright Sunshine

Wear dark goggles.

Bright sun or snow can blind you.

Rocks, Logs, Stumps, Fence Posts

Go slow.

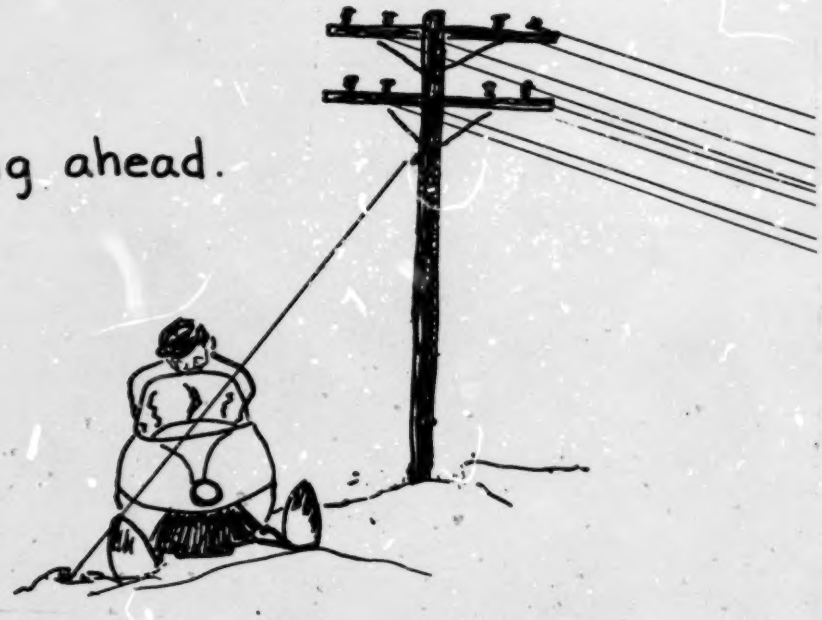
Keep looking ahead.

Stay on trails if you can.

Hidden Wires

Go slow.

Keep looking ahead.



Snowdrifts or Snow Plow Cuts

Jumping on a sno-go is not safe.

But if the trail does drop away from you –

Stand up at the back of the snowmobile.

Bend your knees.

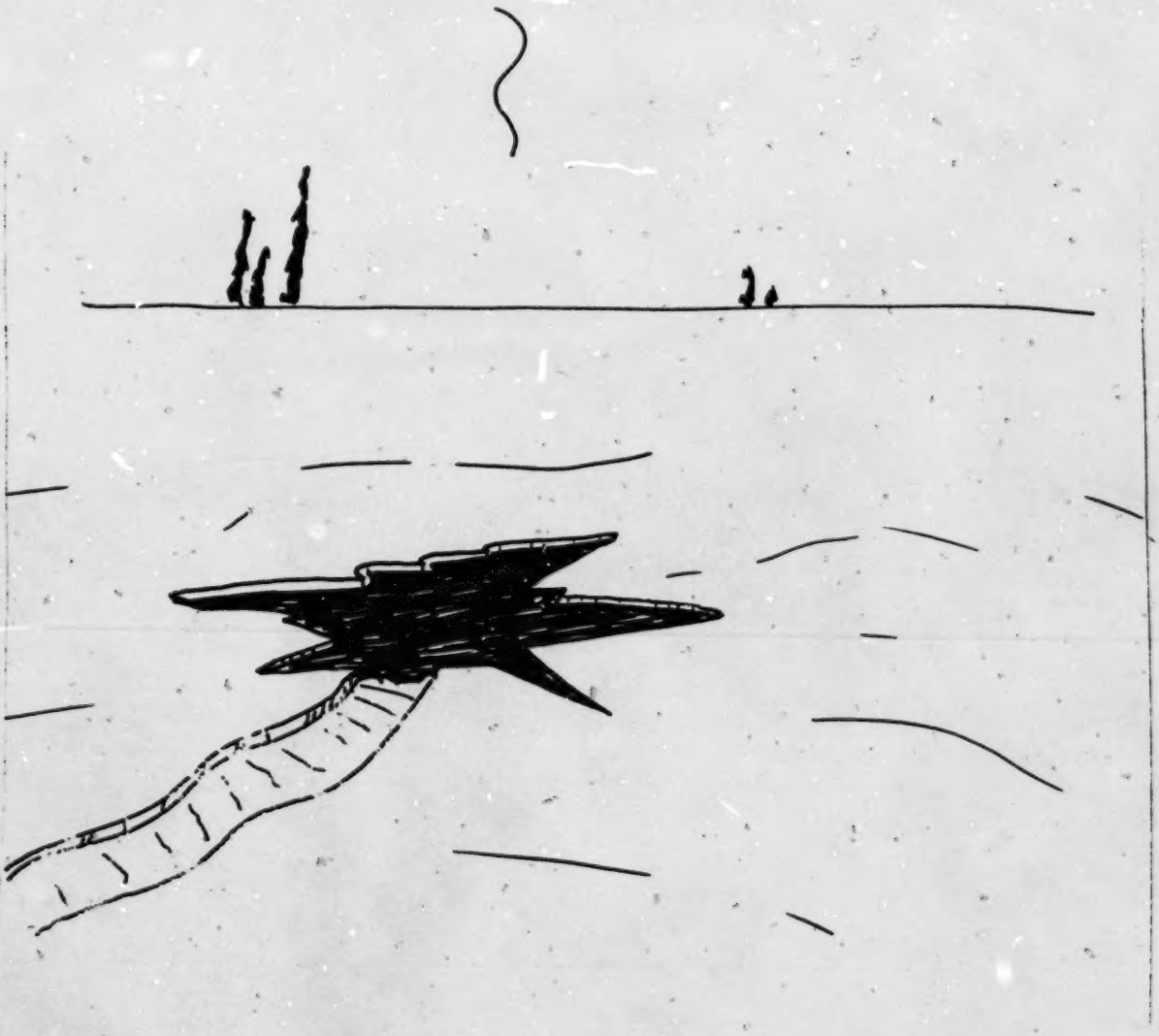
Keep your skiis up.

Be ready to land – hard!

Thin Ice

Check the ice before crossing a lake or river.

or



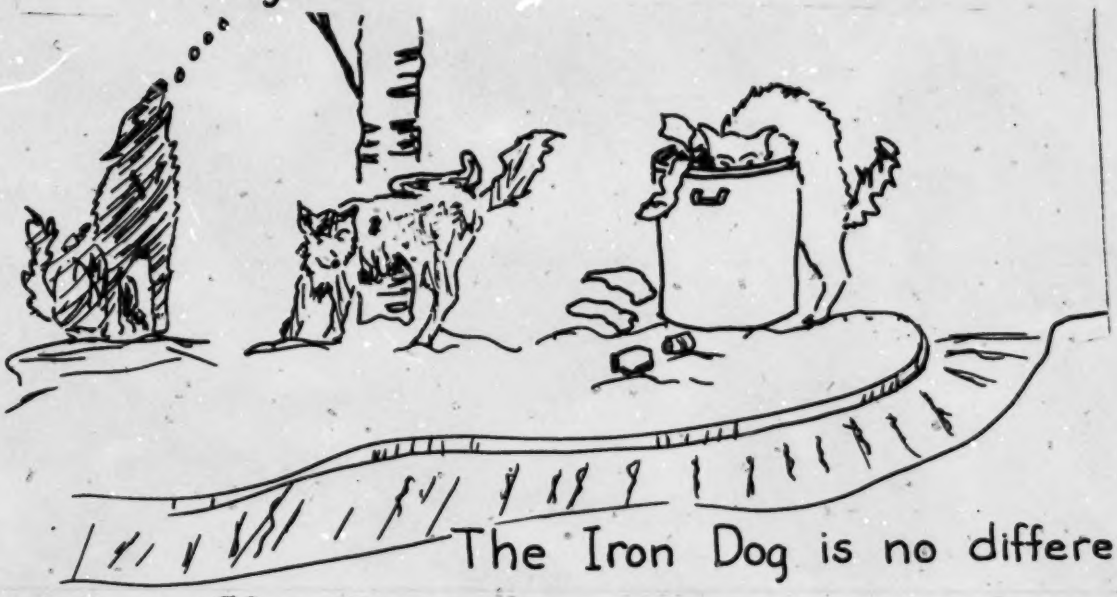
Nobody likes a loose dog!

It makes noise in the night.

It messes people's land.

It bothers other animals.

It goes where it is not wanted.



The Iron Dog is no different.

When an Iron Dog is allowed to run loose –

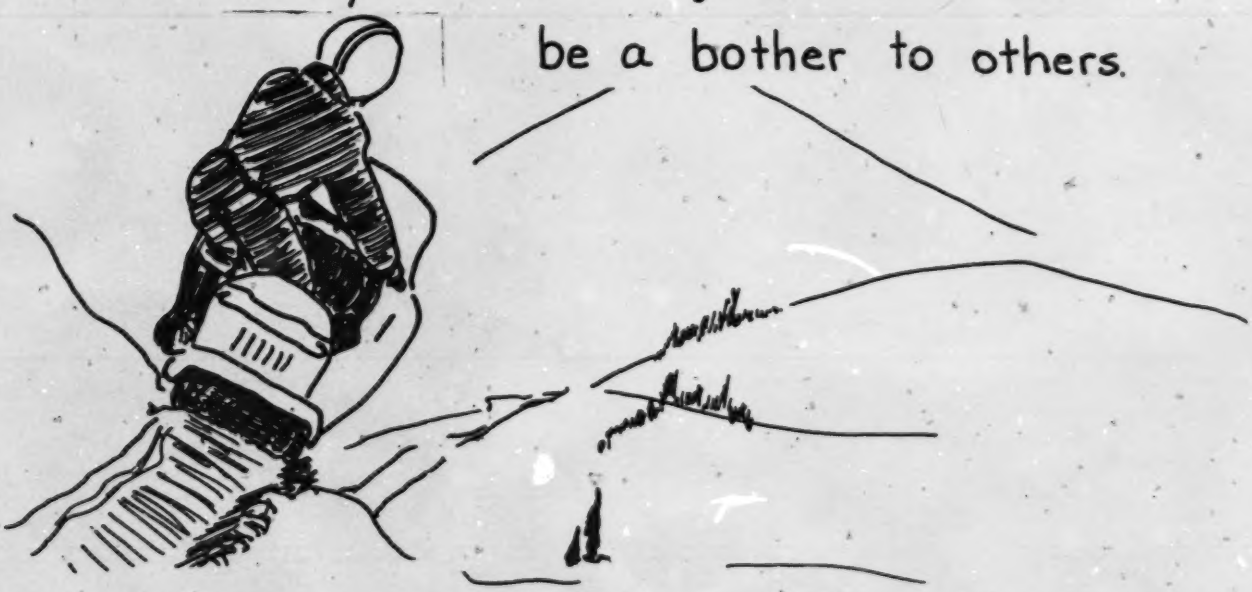
people get mad!

Think of others.

Put yourself in the place of...

people who are sleeping,
kids who are little,
animals who are helpless,
skiers, ice fishermen,
dog sledders, snowshoers,
people who don't want sno-goes on their land.

Think what you can do to help people.
Don't let your Iron Dog
be a bother to others.

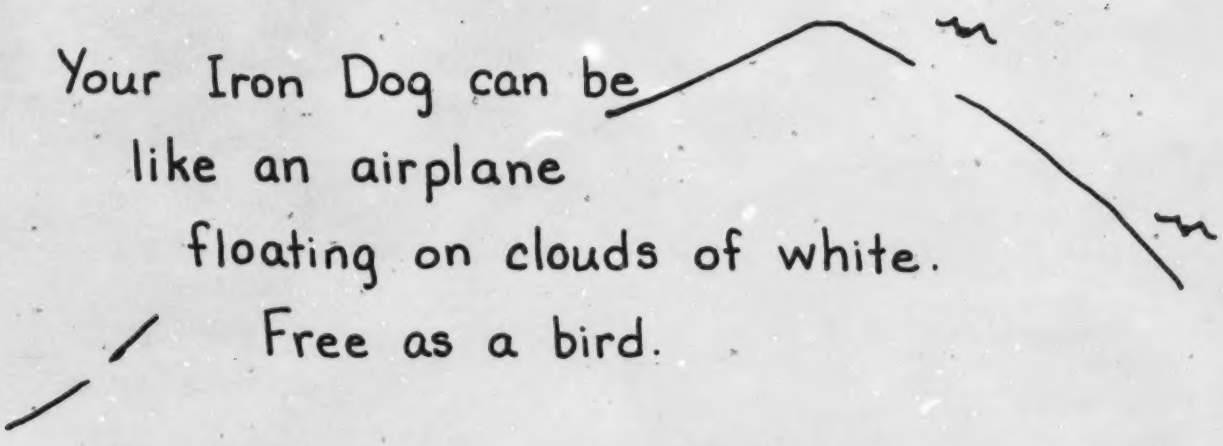


Your Iron Dog can be

like an airplane

floating on clouds of white.

Free as a bird.



Your Iron Dog can help save a life!

Your Iron Dog can be

a friend waiting at your door

to take you where you want to go.

– or –

Your Iron Dog can take you far out

into the cold

and leave you helpless.

Your Iron Dog can break your body.

It can take the life of a friend.

Will your sno-go be

a friend....

...or a killer ?

It is up to You !